

REMARKS

Amendments to claims 1, 19, and 37 are for the purpose of clarifying what Applicants regard as the invention. Amendment to claim 13 is to insert a punctuation mark. No new matter has been added.

I. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,385,724 (Beckman). Applicants respectfully note that in order to sustain a rejection under §102, each element in the rejected claim must be found, either expressly or inherently, in the cited reference.

Claims 1 and 19

Claim 1 has been amended to recite implementing a data object that indicates, *before a link is established between the first and second network nodes*, whether the domain permits the link between the first and second network nodes without verification of user credentials (emphasis added). Claim 19 has been amended to recite a similar limitation. Applicants submit that the claim amendments has overcome the § 102 rejection under Beckman because the cited passages (column 11, lines 23-67, and column 12, lines 1-19) do not disclose or suggest the above limitation. In particular, the cited passages disclose:

A token is kept as part of a process's information to indicate the user initiating the process. By default, calls originating from the process are identified by the operating system as associated with the process's token. Alternatively, an identity can be kept as part of a thread's information (e.g., to facilitate impersonation of a remote user). For example, the thread on which the client object 206 (FIG. 3) is executing may be associated with a token. If so, calls on the thread are identified by the operating system as associated with the thread's token.

A network connection between two machines (e.g., over a LAN or the Internet) can provide a certain degree of confidence about identities reported over the connection. Whenever a caller's identity is provided over a network connection, the degree of certainty about the caller's identity is represented as a particular

authentication level. When the authentication service creates a token, the authentication level information is not placed into the token, but the authentication level used for a particular call is available from COM APIs.

Authentication levels supported by Windows NT include none, connect level authentication, call level authentication, packet level authentication, packet integrity level authentication and encrypted packet authentication. *A low authentication level (e.g., none), indicates no steps have been taken to authenticate the user's identity.* At the authentication level "none," the user's identity is not available to the server. A higher authentication level (e.g., per-packet), indicates that some steps (i.e., each packet has been authenticated) have been taken to authenticate the user's identity. For example, the connect level indicates the user's identity was authenticated when the connection is first made (e.g., using a challenge/response scheme). The following table illustrates various authentication levels defined for Windows NT:

TABLE 1

Name	Description
RPC_C_AUTHN_LEVEL_NONE	No authentication.
RPC_C_AUTHN_LEVEL_CONNECT	Authentication occurs when a connection is made to the server. Connectionless protocols do not use this, see _PKT, below.
RPC_C_AUTHN_LEVEL_CALL	The authentication occurs when a RPC call is accepted by the server. Connectionless protocols do not use this, this, see _PKT below.
RPC_C_AUTHN_LEVEL_PKT	Authenticates the data on a per-packet basis, all data is authenticated.
RPC_C_AUTHN_LEVEL_PKT_INTEGRITY	This authenticates that the data has come from the client, and it checks that the data has not been modified.
RPC_C_AUTHN_LEVEL_PKT_PRIVACY	In addition to the checks made by the other authentication techniques, this encrypts the packet.

(Emphasis added)

According to column 11, lines 44-49 of Beckman, the authentication level “None” is used to indicate that no steps have been taken to authenticate a user’s identity. As such, the authentication level “None” is used to describe a type of authentication that *has already been performed* for an established link, and is not a data object that is used to indicate, *before a link is established, whether a link can be established between two nodes*. For at least the foregoing reason, claims 1 and 19, and their respective dependent claims, are believed allowable over Beckman.

Claim 37

Claim 37 recites a data object associated with the domain, the data object indicating, *before a link is established between the first network node and the second network node*, whether a link can be established between the first network node and the second network node without verification of user credentials (emphasis added). Beckman does not disclose or suggest such limitation. Rather, as discussed previously, Beckman discloses an authentication level “None” which indicates that no steps have been taken to authenticate a user’s identity. As such, the authentication level “None” is used to describe a type of authentication that *has been performed* for an established link, and is not a data object that is used to indicate, *before a link is established, whether a link can be established between two nodes*. For at least the foregoing reason, claim 37 and its dependent claims are believed allowable over Beckman.


CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, all remaining claims are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding this amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Bingham McCutchen's Deposit Account No. 50-2518, referencing billing number **7010852004**. The Commissioner is authorized to credit any overpayment or to charge any underpayment to Bingham McCutchen's Deposit Account No. 50-2518, referencing billing number **7010852004**.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: August 19, 2005

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